

**CALIFORNIA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
STATE YOUTH COUNCIL
January 29, 2003**

MEETING SUMMARY

On January 29, 2003, the State Youth Council of the California Workforce Investment Board convened in the Tsakopoulos Library Galleria, Sacramento, California. The following persons were in attendance:

YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jorge Ayala, Chair
Steve Arcelona
Kenneth Burt
Bernard Davitto
Erin Gabel
Bill Lloyd
Nellie McGarry
David Rattray
Dorothy Thompson
Joseph Werner
Carl Wong

GUESTS

Amy Dean
Thad Ferber
Carlos Lopez
Cheryl Zando

PROGRAM STAFF

Paul Gussman
John Merris-Coots
Margaret Mack
Robert Padilla
Suzette Smith

Welcome and Opening Remarks

State Youth Council Chair Jorge Ayala introduced himself and asked other members to identify themselves and their affiliations.

Mr. Ayala noted the State Youth Council was formed last year to provide leadership for youth issues in California and to provide a voice for youth. In order to accomplish its goals, the State Youth Council formed four work groups to work on key issues: critical youth needs, creation of a comprehensive youth-serving system, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) issues, and youth involvement. Mr. Ayala noted the Youth Council Institute

received national recognition from the National Association of Workforce Agencies, and he commended participants for that achievement.

Mr. Ayala commented that state budget cuts will have a significant impact on youth programs throughout the state. He urged the members of the State Youth Council to stay focused on their task of serving youth and providing high-quality programs.

Mr. Gussman congratulated the Youth Council Institute on receiving the “Architect of Change” award mentioned by Mr. Ayala.

Mr. Gussman noted that in the face of anticipated budget cuts at both the federal and state level, youth development is an increasingly critical means of maintaining economic security. He stressed the importance of investing in youth as a way of ensuring future economic security.

Mr. Bill Lloyd spoke about the need to streamline processes to deliver services to at-risk youth in an effective and efficient manner. He noted youth involvement and participation is essential. He added that he was very excited about the direction and activities of the State Youth Council.

Mr. Gussman noted the new Labor and Workforce Development Agency created by the Governor last year will be focusing on three areas: education and training, enforcement, and research and development. He said the California Workforce Investment Board plans to work with the Gardner Center and other organizations to create a research and development program centered around youth development.

Mr. Gussman discussed the State Board’s involvement in discussions with other large states. He noted large states share many concerns and issues, so working together provides an opportunity to identify common problems and develop mutually helpful solutions.

November 20, 2002 Minutes

Mr. Ayala drew attention to the minutes of the November 20 meeting and welcomed comments. State Youth Council members proposed no changes or corrections. Without objection, the minutes of the November 20 meeting were approved by consensus.

Youth Presentation

Mr. Ayala invited Mr. Don Saylor, Educational Services Branch, California Youth Authority, and members of the youth panel to address the State Youth Council. Mr. Saylor introduced Mr. Ksean Jackson, Mr. Sean Watkins, Mr. Jeremy Johnson, and Mr. Osbaldo Ponce. He noted these four young men, all parolees living in the Sacramento area, would be discussing their experiences in making the transition from the California Youth Authority (CYA) to their communities.

Mr. Saylor stated the California Youth Authority operates eleven institutions, four camps, and seventeen parole offices throughout the state. He noted there are currently about 5,400 young people incarcerated in CYA facilities, 4,200 on parole, with about 1,500 being released each year. The youth committed to CYA facilities range in age from 12 to 25, with an average age of 19. Mr. Saylor stated the average length of incarceration is about 29 months. Although CYA youth are incarcerated for serious crimes, they are often victims themselves of neglect and abuse. Mr. Saylor noted there are high degrees of drug involvement, mental health needs, and gang involvement. Many lack education and motivation, and many have gaps in their developmental processes.

Mr. Saylor described the educational services within CYA. He said CYA operates eleven schools, nine of which are fully accredited. All teachers have teaching credentials, and schools offer courses that meet state standards and performance standards. Mr. Saylor noted the education program is a mixture of academic and vocational instruction, plus courses in value-based character education and work preparation skills.

Mr. Sean Watkins spoke in more detail about CYA's educational programs. He noted recent state budget cuts have impacted the quality and quantity of materials and teachers. He said teachers push students to achieve, but success depends in large part on individual motivation and initiative. Mr. Watkins emphasized the importance of education as a key to freedom. He noted employers look at high school completion as a major factor in hiring people. He said classes in character education, covering topics such as victim awareness, anger management, social thinking, and time management, were particularly helpful to him.

Mr. Jeremy Johnson said he earned his General Education before his release from CYA, and since then, he obtained a full-time job and enrolled in an electronics technician program at Heald College. Mr. Johnson credited the teachers at CYA with helping him appreciate the value of education in becoming a successful member of the community.

Mr. Ksean Jackson thanked the State Youth Council for their interest in helping all youth. He said he took advantage of CYA's educational programs to gain skills in computer management. He added that his family was very supportive of his efforts to improve his education.

Mr. Osbaldo Ponce stated that earning a high school diploma in CYA was instrumental in helping him get a job when he was released. He said he worked for a while in construction, and then took advantage of a truck driving course to obtain a Class A license and forklift certification. Mr. Ponce noted these skills are transferable, ensuring job security for his future.

Mr. Saylor said that for many CYA youth, the transition from institutional life to their community is very difficult. He noted the One-Stops could be an important resource in teaching job skills, assisting with job seeking, and helping obtain employment.

Mr. Ken Burt asked the youth panel members to elaborate on some of the problems they experienced during the transition period.

Mr. Ponce responded that many employers are reluctant to hire parolees, and it is difficult to avoid negative influences in the community.

Mr. Watkins said he became accustomed to the routines and schedules within CYA, which made it difficult to adjust to life outside. He noted he had to get to know his family members again after being away for four years. Mr. Watkins added that he lives in a safe and secure neighborhood now, so he does not have to face the negative influences some youth face when they go back to their old environments.

Mr. Johnson stated it was difficult to find an apartment and a job as a parolee. He noted the transition process took a long time, but he was eventually successful in finding employment and rejoining the community.

Ms. Dorothy Thompson asked if CYA offers job training programs. Mr. Johnson responded that job training is minimal. Mr. Saylor added that about 40 percent of CYA teachers are vocational instructors. He noted CYA also has industry-specific trade advisory committees, but more needs to be done to fill the gap between earning a high school diploma and future employment.

Ms. Thompson asked about soft skills training. Mr. Saylor said CYA offers a class in employability skills. However, course offerings have been cut in recent years due to budget constraints, and job specialists at parole offices were eliminated.

Mr. Steve Arcelona expressed his appreciation to the youth panel members for sharing their experiences and thoughts. He asked them to identify steps that might have helped prevent them from getting into trouble in the first place.

Mr. Jackson stated that negative influences are difficult for children to overcome. He noted involvement in school activities, having caring adults, and exposure to positive success models can all help counteract negative influences. Mr. Jackson added that the CYA education program is based on accountability and self-discipline, and there are consequences if progress is not made as expected.

Ms. Nellie McGarry asked the youth panelists to identify ways youth programs could help them.

Mr. Johnson advocated more vocational training, and he recommended offering courses at parole offices rather than at public schools.

Mr. Ayala thanked Mr. Saylor and the youth panel members for their presentation. He noted that as a result of budget cuts, all high schools in California are focusing more on standards-based core programs, so many vocational and skills-building programs are being eliminated.

Comprehensive State Youth Plan Discussion

Ms. Lois Ann Porter, New Ways to Work, introduced Ms. Amy Dean, Select Committee on Family, Child, and Youth Development, and Mr. Thad Ferber, Forum for Youth Investment. She said Ms. Dean and Mr. Ferber were invited to share their perspectives in the area of youth policy and youth development and make suggestions to assist the State Youth Council in developing a comprehensive youth plan. She invited Ms. Dean and Mr. Ferber to give brief overviews of their backgrounds and interests.

Ms. Dean stated that as a staff member for Senator Alpert, she has been involved in the development of youth policy and legislation. She noted that Senator Alpert has carried several bills to create bodies to look at systematic improvements to the state's system of delivering services to youth, but none have succeeded. She commended the State Youth Council for its efforts in this direction.

Mr. Ferber said he has been working on development of effective youth policies based on input from youth. He noted young people consistently express strong interest in education, jobs, personal and interpersonal development, employability skills, physical health and development, and civic leadership. Mr. Ferber observed that government programs are typically discoordinated and fragmented, so a cohesive, comprehensive system is a worthwhile goal. He commented that young people usually speak in terms of what they want rather than negatives. On the other hand, many youth policies are focused on what society wants youth not to do rather than on what they need for success.

Mr. Ferber advocated a big-picture approach to youth development. He recommended working in connection with various programs to provide the needed broad range of services, identifying and filling gaps, and tracking progress. He said the Forum for Youth Investment has been working on three state initiatives to arrive at an organized, overarching youth development strategy within a cohesive framework. The first initiative, he noted, is the State Youth Development Collaboration Project, which provides funding for 13 states to develop a coordinated, aligned strategy for serving youth people. The second, the National Governors Association Youth Policy Network, provides technical support to foster networking among states. The third initiative, in which California is involved, is the National Crime Prevention Council's effort to bring states together to help align prevention issues across departments and agencies.

Ms. Porter asked Ms. Dean and Mr. Ferber to comment on California's proposal to develop a comprehensive state youth plan.

Ms. Dean said she was impressed by the membership and diversity of the State Youth Council. In order to address the fragmentation of youth services, she noted, the Little

Hoover Commission recommended that the Governor appoint a secretary for youth development and violence prevention, and she supported that approach.

In response to the discussion paper on developing a comprehensive state youth plan, Ms. Dean emphasized that it is essential to work to create linkages, leverage resources, and provide opportunities for youth. She noted this effort will require leadership at both the state and local level. Ms. Dean supported creation of the Youth Advisory Council as a way of generating input from a broad group of youth throughout the state. She emphasized the importance of involving all stakeholders, including youth, in developing the state plan.

Mr. Ferber commended the State Youth Council for its initial efforts to create a comprehensive state plan for youth. He noted the proposal reflects a positive and affirming goal. He recommended increasing investment in youth and increasing youth involvement. He supported the idea of an overarching framework in which to align all the work going on.

Mr. Ferber suggested taking a more active role, shifting from a strategic planning mode to a campaign approach. He recommended focusing on some definite short-term action items as a way of maintaining momentum and attention. He urged the State Youth Council to work with other organizations, such as the Little Hoover Commission, to build capacity and coordinate the aligning tasks. In terms of concrete steps, he advocated identifying chapters for the overall plan, looking for organizations and groups to tackle the designated tasks, supporting those efforts, and tracking progress toward longer-term goals.

Ms. Porter asked Ms. Dean and Mr. Ferber to comment on lessons learned from previous experiences, pitfalls to be avoided, and recommended next steps.

Ms. Dean stated that policy-makers and legislators need a better understanding or articulation of what the State Board and State Youth Council are trying to do. She recommended identifying common goals and working together to achieve them. Ms. Dean noted that stakeholders need to put their resources on the table so they can be leveraged efficiently. She suggested using existing bureaucracies and organizations, supporting them in their tasks, publicizing their successes and challenges, and sharing best practices. Ms. Dean added that it is critical to involve people making budget decisions to gain their support for youth programs.

Mr. Ferber recommended that the State Youth Council develop a toolkit to provide common standards through which to evaluate whether any given policy promotes positive youth development. He noted it would be helpful to provide information on challenges and available resources. He advocated starting by developing an overarching policy agenda, identifying legislation that supports each component, mapping existing policies and legislation, identifying common elements for promoting program quality and building capacity, and networking with others. Mr. Ferber emphasized the importance of basing

policies on sound research. He suggested partnering with the Gardner Center and other organizations to provide research on aligning tasks. He also recommended working with experts in communications to identify effective terminology, and developing reliable indicators to measure progress and outcomes.

Ms. Porter asked Ms. Dean and Mr. Ferber to propose some next steps for the State Youth Council.

Ms. Dean suggested expanding Council membership to include representatives from government, policy, and state and local bureaucracies. She recommended synthesizing and repackaging available research to make it more understandable, partnering with existing research organizations, educating policy-makers, and fostering greater collaboration and communication among education, criminal justice, and health and human services entities.

Mr. Ferber proposed forming an informal “kitchen cabinet” of like-minded colleagues from different perspectives, outlining chapters in the eventual blueprint, looking for small and compelling projects to demonstrate success and build support, and determining what help is needed and seeking that out.

Mr. Joseph Werner asked for advice on how to encourage partners to provide funding and resources. He noted that in these stressed financial times, it is very difficult to get partners to commit financial resources that have been already allocated for different priorities.

Ms. Dean suggested building on work that is already being done. She emphasized the importance of articulating why it makes sense to combine resources to achieve desirable outcomes. She noted that focusing on agreed-upon outcomes for customers is a useful approach. She recommended looking for incentives and added it might be necessary to mandate financial participation at some point.

Mr. Ferber advocated building strong relationships with partners before dealing with financing. He suggested focusing on mutual goals and conceptual tasks.

Mr. David Rattray supported the idea of moving from strategic planning to a campaign mode.

Mr. Arcelona said he liked the notion of creating an informal “kitchen cabinet” to involve like-minded colleagues.

Mr. Bernard Davitto highlighted the importance of implementing research and using feedback from action to make improvements.

Ms. Erin Gabel asked what terminology Mr. Ferber would recommend instead of “youth development.” Mr. Ferber noted the word “learning” has positive connotations, but he recommended leaving that issue up to people with expertise in communications.

Mr. Ayala thanked Ms. Dean and Mr. Ferber for their input. He agreed that aligning tasks was a critical step in arriving at a comprehensive state youth plan. He supported focusing on action, clarity, and a youth voice. Mr. Ayala also expressed appreciation to Senator Alpert for her support and work in this area.

Canadian Career Management Paradigm Shift Presentation

Mr. John Merris-Coots invited Mr. Phil Jarvis, National Life/Work Centre, Canada, and Ms. Charlseay Cartwright, California Career Resource Network, to discuss a new career development paradigm that is gaining wide support in Canada and the Real Game Series.

Mr. Jarvis said he has been working with people in Canada, the U.S., and a number of other countries on a paper describing efforts to shift the typical career management paradigm from a vocational emphasis to a more lifelong, skills-based approach. He noted youth development is at the heart and soul of economic development. Instead of focusing on getting youth to decide on a specific career path, he advocated providing tools for developing career management skills to help people adapt to change and cope effectively with the challenges they face throughout life.

Mr. Jarvis noted work dissatisfaction and economic stress result in loss of productivity and health problems that affect the overall health of our societies. He recommended helping people connect with work, learning, family, and community as a way of combating these problems. Mr. Jarvis described a Blueprint for Life/Work Design being used in Canada and elsewhere to identify basic competencies appropriate for different levels of development. He said the goal is to provide all citizens with the skills they need to build relationships with friends and loved ones, connect with their communities, and choose and hold appropriate jobs.

Mr. Jarvis noted Canada and the U.S. developed the Real Game Series as a curriculum for use in elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools. Under this program, students participate in a simulation experience that demonstrates the importance of academic skills and career management. Mr. Jarvis added that the curriculum has enormous potential for California, and he encouraged State Youth Council members to learn more about the series.

Ms. Cartwright explained that the California Career Research Network is charged with providing career information to people in K-12 schools and adult programs using Perkins funding. She noted resources are extremely limited, so partnerships with other organizations are critical. She added that use of the Real Game Series described by Mr. Jarvis is a very cost-effective way of leveraging resources.

Mr. Rattray asked if the “Real Game” curriculum will be available online. Mr. Jarvis responded that the Real Game is designed as a small group interactive curriculum and will not be available as an online resource. He added that the \$200 cost of the curriculum covers all the materials needed by teachers and schools.

Ms. Cartwright said her office is working to align the “Real Game Series” curriculum with California’s academic standards. She noted schools are so focused on standards and testing now that they are resistant to adding new programs; she confirmed that the “Real Game” supports academic standards.

Mr. Jarvis added that anecdotal information from pilot classrooms indicates attendance increases, academic achievement goes up, and student behavior improves when the “Real Game Series” is used. He noted Canada is undertaking an impact analysis to measure its effects on attendance, completion, reductions in drop-out rates, and academic performance.

Mr. Ayala thanked Mr. Jarvis and Ms. Cartwright for their presentation.

Lunch Recess - Work Group Meetings

Mr. Merris-Coots noted the Youth Council’s four work groups would be meeting during the lunch break. He invited audience members and guests to sit in on the work group meetings. He also encouraged Council members not assigned to a particular group to join the meetings and participate in the discussions.

Federal Update

Mr. Ayala invited Mr. Tim Rainey, California Workforce Association (CWA), and Mr. Steve Trippe, New Ways to Work, to provide an update on federal reauthorization efforts and budget issues.

For Fiscal Year 2003, Mr. Rainey noted, the Bush administration is proposing about \$655 million in cuts to WIA programs across the board, representing a 13 percent reduction in dislocated workers, a 5 percent cut to adult programs, and a 9 percent cut to youth, along with elimination of Youth Opportunity grants. In response to the Bush administration proposal, Mr. Rainey reported, the Department of Labor sent back a proposal for even less money.

Mr. Rainey said that although the 107th Congress rejected the White House cuts and restored \$655 million to WIA in its budget proposal, that bill did not pass, and mid-term elections changed the makeup of the Senate. The current Senate proposal calls for about \$500 million in cuts to WIA. Mr. Rainey said the House proposal is similar.

Mr. Trippe clarified that the Senate proposal includes \$1 billion for youth allocations plus \$44 million for Youth Opportunity grants; the House proposes taking Youth Opportunity grants out of the \$1 billion allocation to youth programs.

Mr. Trippe reported that he and Ms. Porter had just returned from a policy briefing in Washington, D.C., regarding the status of reauthorization and other federal activities. He said the White House has established a task force on disadvantaged youth to make recommendations on streamlining activities to improve results for young people. He suggested that the State Youth Council might want to work with other organizations to develop comments on those recommendations. Mr. Trippe noted there is general concern about the implications of the task force's findings and fear that they may be used to cut more money from youth programs. He emphasized the importance of educating people about the need to educate and prepare young people to maintain a healthy economy.

Mr. Trippe said there are a number of programs up for reauthorization, including WIA, TANF, special education, and higher education. Key players believe WIA and TANF reauthorization will move quickly, with only a few minor tweaks and adjustments. Mr. Trippe noted more about reauthorization prospects will be known on February 3 when the Department of Labor issues its white paper and the Bush administration submits its proposed budget for 2004.

Mr. Trippe reported that there were a number of rumors discussed at the policy briefing, including the possibility that youth councils will be made optional or eliminated. He said it is unclear whether that decision would be up to states or locals. Another possibility discussed was a full focus of WIA dollars on out-of-school youth, which is contrary to the State Youth Council's endorsement of the all-youth, one-system approach. Mr. Trippe added that the concept of universal access is not likely to gain much support in this climate.

Mr. Trippe reviewed his written summary of the other comments and presentations made at the policy briefing. He noted Jane Oates, staff to Senator Ted Kennedy, expressed strong interest in maintaining youth programs and services. James Bergeron, an aide to Congressman Buck McKeon, identified issues pertaining to WIA: strengthening its connection to economic development, involving businesses, improving One-Stops, and expanding eligibility of youth.

Mr. Trippe recommended that the State Youth Council and State Board work with CWA, YCI, and others to design a unified strategy on WIA reauthorization.

Mr. Gussman agreed with the need to take develop a coordinated approach. He noted it might be more effective to describe what direction California is moving than to try to dictate to Washington what is needed. Mr. Gussman said some states are advocating for greater flexibility in allocating WIA funds, which could lead to the possibility of resurrecting block grants and further reductions in money.

Mr. Rattray said the Los Angeles City Workforce Investment Board hired a public affairs firm to organize its own voice for youth. He added he would be attending the National Workforce Investment Board meeting on March 2 through 4, which could provide an opportunity to form an effective California coalition to begin working on a unified

strategy. Mr. Rattray emphasized the need to make sure youth issues are properly represented.

Mr. Rattray suggested using the nine National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) positions as a starting point for a unified lobbying effort.

Mr. Arcelona proposed that the State Youth Council take a position against making youth councils optional and supporting the All-Youth One-System approach.

Mr. Rattray noted the NYEC positions are complementary to those concepts. He recommended that the State Youth Council endorse the NYEC positions. There was general consensus among Council members supporting that approach.

Mr. Trippe recommended the following steps: agreeing on a general set of principles around which reauthorization should be framed, organizing responses to the administration's recommendations, and submitting input on specific provisions in the WIA that should be amended.

Mr. Rainey noted Congressman McKeon is developing his own proposal for WIA reauthorization. He said CWA has already provided a reauthorization policy document and will be working closely with Mr. McKeon throughout the process. Mr. Rainey agreed it would be helpful to meet at the CWA youth conference to begin organizing. He also recommended that Youth Council members talk to their Congress representatives to urge their support for important WIA reauthorization issues.

Mr. Ayala thanked Mr. Rainey and Mr. Trippe for their update.

Work Group Reports

Critical Youth Needs

Mr. Merris-Coots reported that the Critical Youth Needs Work Group is sending a letter to local youth councils to encourage them to map available resources for youth in their areas. He noted the State Youth Council will then create a database library of local resource maps that can be shared on a statewide basis.

Mr. Merris-Coots said the Critical Youth Needs Work Group will continue working on improving One-Stop services by including youth elements in One-Stop surveys and encouraging a greater emphasis on providing services for youth. He noted there is a current multi-agency effort to link emancipated foster youth with the One-Stop system.

Comprehensive Youth-Serving System

Mr. Rattray said the Comprehensive Youth-Serving System Work Group sent letters to all youth councils in the state endorsing the All-Youth One-System approach and asking for feedback; about half responded. Of those, 84 percent report they are utilizing the All-Youth One-System framework; 88 percent indicated it has impacted their work. About half formally adopted the approach, and 44 percent said their local WIBs had formally

recognized the youth council's adoption. Two-thirds of respondents said the All-Youth One-System framework and tools impacted a broader youth services agenda in their areas.

Mr. Rattray said he would report at a future meeting on the work group's discussion of outcome measures and the comprehensive youth plan.

Workforce Investment Act Issues

Mr. Arcelona reported that the WIA Issues Work Group is making good progress on all its tasks. He said the work group heard a presentation from the Department of Social Service's Office of the Ombudsman for Foster Care. She reported there will be regulatory changes requiring the state's independent living skills program to coordinate with One-Stops and services to youth.

Mr. Arcelona drew attention to the legislative update provided in the meeting packet. He said the report will track all legislation pertaining to youth.

Mr. Arcelona said that as mentioned earlier by Mr. Rainey, the federal Office of Management and Budget is looking at using common outcome measures for job training. He noted affected programs would include those administered by the Department of Labor, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Veteran Affairs, Department of the Interior, and Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Youth Involvement

Ms. Erin Gabel reported that the Youth Involvement Work Group is busy planning the March 29 Youth Advisory Council event. She said this meeting will be held at the Sacramento Holiday Inn, and invitations would be mailed out within the next week. She welcomed feedback from State Youth Council members as to possible roles and projects for that group.

State Youth Council Member Announcements

Mr. Carlos Lopez expressed concern about the trend toward less WIA money available for training. He noted One-Stop providers are having to devote more funding to core and intensive services, leaving little available for training. He added this affects both youth and adults, and he suggested that the State Youth Council address this issue.

Mr. Merris-Coots noted Vice Chair Myeshia Grice wanted State Youth Council members to know that the California Youth Connection, a foster youth organization, will be holding a rally at the State Capitol on Monday, February 3, at noon.

Other Business

Mr. Ayala reminded State Youth Council members that the next meeting is scheduled for April 30.

There were no items of other business considered by the State Youth Council. Mr. Ayala thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting.